

Netherlands new issue uses perfin to show the value of the stamp

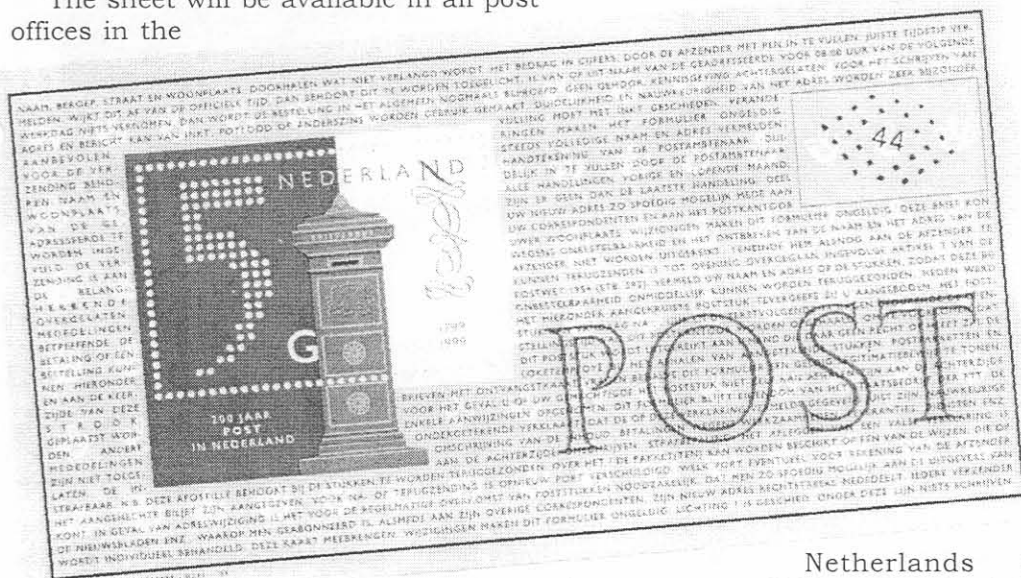
The Netherlands issued a stamp in a miniature sheet in October—and the value of the 5-guilder issue is in the form of a perfin. It's the first time we are aware of that a postal authority has actually perforated a numeral value into a new issue.

The miniature sheet is shown here slightly reduced. The numeral 5 consists of 70 perforated holes. The 5-guilder value, in the words of the Dutch postal service, "can be used to pay postage on heavier postal items." At current exchange rates, the stamp has a face value of about US\$2.50.

Part of the proceeds from the sale of the souvenir sheet will be used to organize a special philatelic event in the second half of 2002.

The souvenir sheet design was inspired by an 80-cent stamp issued in January 1999 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Dutch postal service. The post box shown on the sheet is of the design used throughout the Netherlands from the middle 1800s until fairly modern times. The boxes were made of Belgian ashlar and by 1930 some 1800 of them were in use. At the top right of the sheet is a reproduction of the numeral cancellation 44, the old number of the post office in the Hague. The background of the sheet is made up of text taken from various postal forms in use over the last 200 years.

The sheet will be available in all post offices in the



Netherlands as long as they last or until November 1 of this year.

If you don't have a trip to the Netherlands on the schedule for this year, you can still get a copy of this unusual perfin, thanks to Perfins Club member William Baekers (137L).

A mint souvenir sheet will cost you \$5.00, a first day cover \$6.00, or the two together can be yours for just \$9.00. If you send him \$12.00, he will use one of the souvenir sheets as postage on the shipment to you. If you take advantage of this offer, please deal in cash. That's the easiest for him to handle. You can contact him direct if you want to send payment in other forms.

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